

gold, deepening and widening as the more transitory violet fades. Against this background the mountain ranges extend, a cold and dark blue, almost lapis-lazuli, the separate redwoods on the crest of the Santa Cruz range distinct forty miles away against the gold—this, remember, nearly half an hour after sunset. By imperceptible degrees the yellow reddens to orange, narrowing as it deepens, then passes into a heavy red, lying just above the dark blue hills and giving them an even more marvelous contrasting background than before. Sometimes the violet passes into the yellow and the yellow into red so suddenly that it is over while you turn your head to watch the reflected color in the east; oftener the changes are gradual, but the ember-like red glow is the only one that is not quite transitory; it smoulders slowly for an hour, and paints smooth water into salmon-pink surfaces on which reflections are etched, exactly as did the more brilliant glow of a month earlier.

Seeing how invariable is the succession of violet, yellow, red, I have tried very hard to construct a spectrum, but without success. Beyond an occasional lemon-green in the earliest yellow I have never been able to fit

green into its place; and the orange stage through which the yellow light passes into red is not a very true orange. Once, as the violet was yielding to yellow in the west, I saw the *east* painted with a very wide and unmistakable green light; but there was nothing in the opposite sky to account for it. Again, I have noticed curious streaks and bands of olive-green crossing the other colors as irregularly as streaks of cloud; though there was no appearance of cloudiness in their composition, it seems impossible that they should have been anything else than very thin mists, turned into olive by the color they crossed. There is almost always some green sky in various quarters of the heaven during the whole procession of color; but that is true in every clear sunset, and there seems no regularity in its appearance. Of blue or indigo, I have never been able to discover a trace, nor to imagine anything nearer it than perhaps a bluer quality in the lower margin of the violet. But in all such successions of color in nature there are so infinite gradations of shading that it would require an eye with both the painter's and the scientist's training to so follow them as to be certain of any accuracy in reporting.

Overland, Feb 1884

OREGON.¹

IF the general character of the first two volumes of "American Commonwealths" is maintained throughout the series, our popular literature will receive an addition of very readable books. In writing "Virginia," Mr. Cooke had before him a more ambitious plan than that which the author of the present volume has endeavored to carry out. "Virginia" purports to be "a history of the people," while, under the general title of "Oregon," Mr. Barrows undertakes to present what he terms "the struggle for possession." The former work gives us an incom-

plete treatment of a very broad subject; the latter, a sufficiently full treatment of a comparatively narrow subject. "Oregon" is in no sense a history of the state or of the people; it is merely a historical monograph descriptive of that series of events which led to the establishment of the American claim to all territory in the northwest south of the forty-ninth parallel and the Straits of Fuca. There is no attempt made to trace the history of immigration and settlement, to describe the development of local and state governments, to indicate the spread of schools and churches, or to point out the progress of the commonwealth as shown by the growth of its commercial and industrial

¹ Oregon: The Struggle for Possession. By William Barrows. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1884. For sale by Billings, Harbourn & Co., S. F.

enterprises. These topics, which belong properly in a history of Oregon, find no place in the volume before us, because they lie beyond the limits its author has fixed for his writing. It is therefore evident that the book is to be viewed simply as an account of events preparatory to the foundation of the State.

Early in the present century, by the withdrawal of all Russian claims to territory south of latitude fifty-four degrees forty minutes, the parties in the struggle were finally reduced to two, the United States and Great Britain. The latter power was represented by the Hudson Bay Company. The struggle of the agents of this great commercial corporation and the people of the United States for the possession of disputed territory furnishes the author an opportunity to contrast the policies carried out by the two powers. On the one hand, all efforts are put forth to resist the advances of civilization and to preserve unbroken the primeval solitude of the wilderness; on the other hand civilization is urged into the wilderness, and the hunting-grounds are transformed into cultivated fields and centers of industry and trade. The policy pursued by the Hudson Bay Company is designated as "the great English mistake"—a double mistake, in fact. "It was a mistake in attempting to take and hold Oregon by trapping as against colonizing; and it was a mistake to sacrifice so largely the English interests in America to a corporate monopoly.

In dealing with the enterprises of the missionaries and their influence in bringing civilization into Oregon, Mr. Barrows enters upon a topic regarding which partisan views are in conflict. There are, on the one hand, those who advocate the claims of the early Methodist missionaries to prominent recognition, and, on the other, those who would pass over their labors as insignificant, and lay special stress on the work accomplished by the delegates of the American Board of Missions. Doubtless our author is right in giving superior prominence to the latter, but he might well have made his writing appear less one-sided by giving a somewhat more

circumstantial account of the earliest Protestant missions within the present limits of Oregon. But the book was evidently designed to be picturesque, filled with striking scenes, and for this purpose the earliest missions had less to offer than the expeditions on which Dr. Whitman was concerned. In keeping with this design, also, the journey of the four Flat-Head Indians to St. Louis is introduced with effect; and the farewell address of the two survivors, when they were about to return to their people, will bear repetition:

"I came to you over a trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friend of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I came with one eye partly opened, for more light for my people, who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind, to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms, through many enemies and strange lands, that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. The two fathers who came with us—the braves of many winters and wars—we leave asleep here by your great water and wigwam. They were tired in many moons, and their moccasins wore out. My people sent me to get the white man's Book of Heaven. You took me where you allow your women to dance, as we do not ours, and the Book was not there. You took me where they worship the Great Spirit with candles, and the Book was not there. You showed me the images of good spirits, and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long, sad trail to my people of the dark land. You make my feet heavy with burdens and gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, but the Book is not among them. When I tell my poor, blind people after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the Book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on the long path to the other hunting grounds. No white

man will go with them, and no white man's Book, to make the way plain. I have no more words."

The story of Dr. Whitman's services occupies here quite properly a prominent place. His wise foresight, his quick resolution, his heroic daring should not be forgotten. The winter journey eastward over the mountains was an undertaking that required no ordinary nerve and force. We cannot but admire the keen vision and unflinching heroism by which the solution of an important problem was perceived and accomplished. Yet, had there been less that was really admirable in the conduct of Dr. Whitman, Mr. Barrows would have made his efforts in behalf of the settlement of Oregon by Americans appear ridiculous, by the frequent changes which he has rung on "Dr. Whitman's old wagon."

After Dr. Whitman's famous ride, and return to Oregon with a well mounted train of two hundred wagons, the crisis was passed. "Dr. Whitman set foot in stirrup at his door for Washington October 3rd, 1842, and dismounted there again September 4th, 1843. Eleven months that heroic wife and the mission band waited for the first word or rumor while he twice crossed the continent. They heard the clatter of his horse's feet die away, as he rode off up the Walla Walla, and knew

afterwards only that the mountains received him and there winter awaited him. What months of waiting for them, and of working for him! Again the clatter of horses' feet is heard on the Walla Walla, and the rider leaves stirrup for the threshold of his cabin door. There followed him down the Cascade Mountains and into that splendid valley, in little companies, and in long, weary file, jaded and battered, and mended after mountain style, two hundred emigrant wagons. They emptied their families here and there, the women and children; and scattered all about were cattle and dogs; while lank backwoodsmen, with the inevitable rifle, lounged and strolled, and they continue to arrive even after the light snows of the country have come. It was the army of occupation for Oregon." (p. 253.)

The rest of the struggle for possession was short. The immigrants virtually settled the question, and it remained only for the two governments to agree on a boundary line. This agreement was reached in the Oregon treaty of 1846; but it took until 1872 to interpret the treaty, and practically establish the line laid down by it. This part of the story is briefly told. We are thus brought to that point where the history of Oregon as a civilized community begins.

ETC.

It is a healthful sign that in these latter days talk about making laws has given place, to some extent, to talk about enforcing them. Professional Criminal Acts, Law and Order Leagues, and the remonstrances from cautious thinkers against pushing legislation faster than it can be enforced, all show the awakening of a sense—or rather, the re-awakening, for it was active among the founders of our government—that the fact of citizenship in a republic constitutes an obligation to see its laws administered. Americans have been too much given to seeing only the rights and not the duties conferred by such citizenship: the proposition that in a republic every man is a sovereign has been infinitely repeated; but who has ever heard the corollary of the same proposition urged—that every man in a republic, therefore, is a servant? We, who glory in the privilege of making

our own laws, must not shirk the burden of seeing them enforced. If the machinery provided for representing us in this function is insufficient, we must supplement it. If a high-minded philosopher who had lived only under tyranny were to sit down and draw up, out of his inner consciousness, a plan of a republican government such as ours, it would seem probable that he would leave out of his scheme entirely any provision for the case of broken laws. How should it be conceivable to him that a party of people who were bound together in mutual help and protection, feeling no restraint but that of rules agreed upon among themselves, should break their own rules? And, indeed, this ideal view of their relation to the states was not uncommon among our forefathers, colonial and revolutionary; but when the little country they had themselves brought into exist-